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STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3897th meeting of the Security Council, held on 29 June 1998, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "Children and armed conflict", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council expresses its grave concern at the harmful impact of armed conflict on children.

"The Security Council strongly condemns the targeting of children in armed conflicts, including their humiliation, brutalization, sexual abuse, abduction and forced displacement, as well as their recruitment and use in hostilities in violation of international law, and calls upon all parties concerned to put an end to such activities.

"The Security Council calls upon all parties concerned to comply strictly with their obligations under international law, in particular their obligations under the Geneva Conventions of 1949, the Additional Protocols of 1977 and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989. The Council stresses the obligation of all States to prosecute those responsible for grave breaches of international humanitarian law.

"The Security Council recognizes the importance of the mandate of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Children and Armed Conflict, supports his activities and welcomes his cooperation with all relevant programmes, funds and agencies of the United Nations system which he deems appropriate.

"The Security Council expresses its intention to pay serious attention to the situation of children affected by armed conflicts and, to this end, to maintain contact, as appropriate, with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and with the relevant programmes, funds and agencies of the United Nations system.

"The Security Council, while dealing with situations of armed conflict, expresses its readiness to consider, when appropriate, means to assist with the effective provision and protection of humanitarian aid and

assistance to civilian population in distress, in particular women and children; to consider appropriate responses whenever buildings or sites that usually have a significant presence of children such as, inter alia, schools, playgrounds, hospitals, are specifically targeted; to support efforts aimed at obtaining commitments to put to an end the recruitment and use of children in armed conflicts in violation of international law; to give special consideration to the disarmament and demobilization of child soldiers, and to the reintegration into society of children maimed or otherwise traumatized as a result of an armed conflict; and to support or promote child-focused mine clearance and mine-awareness programmes, as well as child-centred physical and social rehabilitation programmes.

"The Security Council recognizes the importance of special training of personnel involved in peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building activities on the needs, interests and rights of children, as well as on their treatment and protection.

"The Security Council further recognizes that, whenever measures are adopted under Article 41 of the United Nations Charter, consideration should be given to their impact on the civilian population, bearing in mind the needs of children, in order to consider appropriate humanitarian exemptions."